

August 20, 1961

Sunday

Ogbomosho

My last diary closed just as we were leaving here to go to America three months earlier than expected because of Ma's having her third major operation in one years time. That book covered our first three years here in Nigeria from August 1957 to April 1960. The book was left in a trunk upstairs in the attic of the home of my father-in-law Mr. E. G. Blankenship of near Union Mills, N.C.

I now regret very much not keeping the diary on through our furlough year. But after the lapse of so much time it would be impossible to catch the poignancy of my memories of it in a synopsis. Impossible to catch the heat and swelter of August days in a rundown poorly furnished apartment in Columbia... impossible to portray the tingling sting of a prickly heat rash as I ironed in the living room on the week that Alice went to Y.W.A. camp at Ridgecrest... impossible to describe the palpitating thrill of leading young R.A.'s to accept Christ at an encampment at Fort Mill, S.C.... impossible to tell the deep satisfaction of sitting in the Spring House at Gardener Webb College and leading a young G.A. girl to trust in Jesus as her savior... the feeling of partnership with God... a singular unity with sunsets... a quiet tranquillity with rain.

How impossible to describe Benjy as he danced up and down on the lawn in Wake Forest as the only snow of the year came floating down... the light in Alisa's eyes as she brought home her finger paint pictures from kindergarten... or Harriet's childish way of

saying "No, I don't want to, but if you want me to I will."

And how can one describe sitting by the bedside of his wife as she labors to have their fourth child, a girl, born on April first... or the radiance of Alice's face as she brought Marianne home flanked by me with a camera and a nurse with flowers.

Our '53 Ford with the cracked motor block that carried us twenty thousand miles... a year of study at Southeastern Seminary... three month's part-time work at Dorothea Dix Hospital in Raleigh, N.C... music lessons for Alice... visits with the families... Orientation Conference for furloughing missionaries in Miami Florida... So. Baptist Convention... measles... Foreign Mission's week at Ridgecrest... buying to return to Nigeria... packing and having crates all over the house.

We left from Columbia on May 29, 1961, and arrived in Nigeria on June 2, 1961. We had three days in Paris, but we also had four children; so we did not sight-see very much. We enjoyed one afternoon in the garden of the Tuileries.

After landing in Lagos, we traveled immediately here to Ogbomosho with the Smiths. We stayed with the Smiths in their house through out the month of June until the Phillpotts went on furlough, and this house was empty.

We have had a grand time settling in, putting up new mirrors, putting down new rugs, and so forth. It was very pleasant to renew

old acquaintances, to go to the fourth of July party at the West's with twenty four Nigerians and six Americans, the going away party

for the Wests and Reedbrooks given by the Red Cross. One day the Smiths, Wests, Edwards, Chief Kuti, the Dahunsis, and the Geshindes all rented a bus and went to Dr. Ademola's wedding in Abeokuta.

Mission Meeting was a short one, but "this year was the year of locations" as the poem went at the close of the meeting. We were seriously considered for the Health Service, but to our joy we were assigned to Yoruba language school in Oyo for one year. We are to leave for Oyo in a few weeks.

Indeed it is impossible to tell about the activities of more than a year in a few pages. There is nothing too specific to tell about today, but rather than wait any longer I thought it best to start writing again.

Today Alice has been somewhat sick with a sore throat and occasional light fever. Benjy, Alisa, Harriet and I went to church this morning, but none of us made it tonight.

September 3, 1961

Sunday

Oyo

The Pittman's loads came a week ago Friday night while the Pattersons and Smiths were having a Curry Dinner at our house in Ogbomosho. We asked them to go ahead and unload most of their things in our house in Ogbomosho since they were to live there as soon as we moved here to Oyo. Since the things were there we quit work at the hospital and moved on here.

We packed on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, and moved on Thursday. By Thursday night we were "bone weary" -- even my

Charley horse was tired.

Friday and yesterday we managed to settle in and now it seems very homey in our new house.

Our house here is an old one made of mud with a cement plaster overlay. The ceiling is aluminum pan as well as the roof. When the ripe Isin nuts fall on it from an overhanging tree it makes a cracking sound that gives us all a start. But we are pleasantly anticipating the drumming sound rain will make on it. Friday night lower lung lobe, so we started her on Penicillin tablets and Aspirin immediately. But she has undoubtedly developed a little pneumonia from moving in this cold weather. This middle dry season has been unusually cool, and we have slept under two blankets and wished for more at times.

Alice, Benjy, and Harriet have gone to Baptist Boy's High School Chapel for Sunday Morning Service today for the main service of a G.A. house party there this weekend. I have stayed home with Alisa and the baby.

September 9, 1961

Saturday

Oyo

Alice and I are sitting in the living room of this small but comfortable house listening to long play records on the phonograph and just enjoying the peace and solitude.

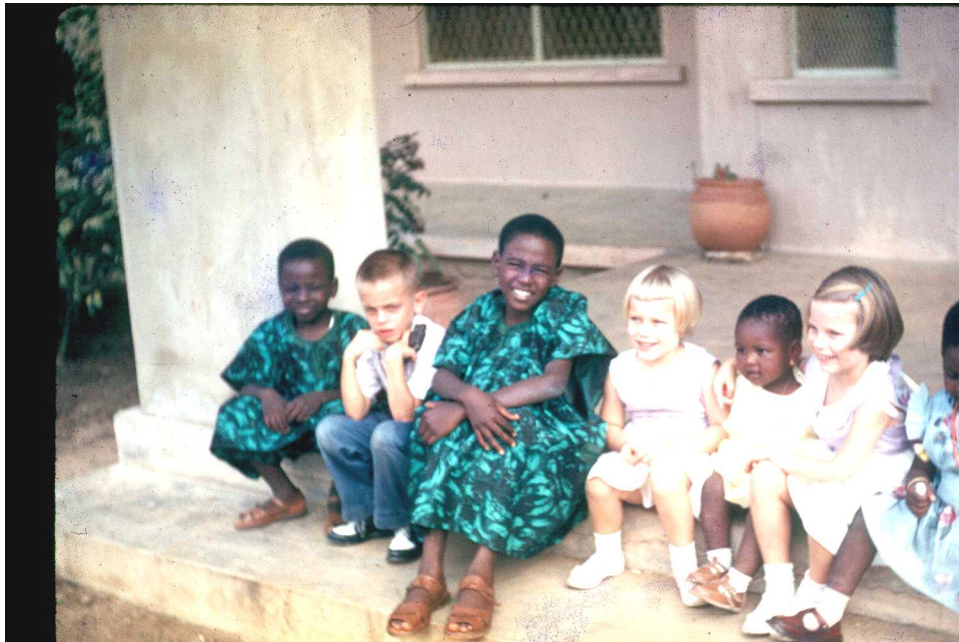
It has been a quiet, undemanding week for our Yoruba classes do not begin until next Monday.

I started Benjy's first grade lessons this past Wednesday. He is alert and interested, and it takes only two hours per day to

teach him.

Alice has been busy arranging our new home, supervising Amos, Welcome, and Awudi and washing and so forth. I have made use of this week to put new brake shoes on the car, repair the wheel cylinder, fix the tie rods, and so forth.

Every one in the family except me has been somewhat sick this week. I have been very healthy so far this tour.



The Geshinde Children with our Children

Tuesday we went to Ibadan to go shopping and met the Geshindes for lunch. They took us out to 'Lafia Rest House on the Abeokuta road just beyond Moore Plantation. It is a beautiful place and is very peaceful and quiet to be so near the road.

After lunch Oyinka helped Alice pick some material for a "buba"¹⁷ which is lovely. We were happy to be able to return the social compliment and have the Geshindes here for supper yesterday.

I went down town today to get a haircut in a little barber shop shanty. As I sat waiting on one of the rickety chairs in the quaint little shop I watched a young girl get water at the market tap. The tap shuts itself off automatically and must be pushed constantly to obtain a stream of water.

She placed her bucket under the tap and held both hands on it as she pushed; at the same time she danced from the waist down to the tune of the jazzy high life on redifusion.

She looked from side to side and wagged her head to the tune of the music -- stopping frequently as her attention was caught by a passing lorry or she momentarily became absorbed in saluting a passing friend.

Before the bucket was half full she stopped pressing on the tap and began leaning ineffectually on it to relax while viewing all the market about her. She would rewrap her cloths, nod at passersby and wiggle and dance to the unceasing clamor of the redifusion. Then remembering her quest she would make a quick slap at the tap producing a short burst of water. Finally she placed the bucket on her head and weaved, wiggled, danced, and walked away; frequently she turned to talk and look wide-eyed at

¹⁷Buba is the Yoruba word for a loose fitting light weight blouse.

all around her. Often she made snaky writhings of her shoulders and neck to balance the water as she ambled away.

After getting a good hair cut, in the homemade barber chair that used a car wheel for the seat so it would rotate well, Benjy and I walked up the little dusty street from the main road to the little Baptist Book Store.

We held hands as we kicked up little swirls of dust at our heels. We passed a black and white spotted goat which stood with back legs strutted out as it urinated in the road. We saluted two very dirty little children who we saw playing in the black powdery dust of a charcoal seller's stall. We stopped at a goldsmith's shanty and bought two light weight bracelets for two shillings each from the clean-faced, smiling little boy. We stopped to talk on the verandah of a little stall which contained food, tinned salmon and so forth. There was a young woman seated straddle-legged on the floor with knees straight while an older woman platted her hair.

We reached the Baptist Book Store: a little dingy shop measuring about eight feet by twelve feet. The wooden doors hung askew and a sign over them said: "Agent for the Nigerian Baptist Book Store." Inside were some counters with broken glass fronts. A scrawled sign said "Watch out for glass - by Owner." There were a few books available, but after looking over the stock we only bought a 4 pence pencil sharpener and left.

September 19, 1961

Tuesday

Oyo

Alice did her first devotional in Yoruba today. Of course it was short and simple, but still something to be proud of after only one week of language study. We each take turns doing these devotionals in Yoruba each morning before language school begins.

Our days are filled with language study. And much of the time we are not in class we spend at home with the books. However after we settle into the routine well perhaps we will have more free time. I have not visited yet as I had hoped to do.

September 24, 1961

Sunday

Oyo

We had our first language exam on Friday which covered two week's work. Part of the examination was to read a story in Yoruba into the tape recorder. It can be right discouraging to listen back to the mistakes in tone and expression as well as in words.

Friday night the Fines, Martins, and Marian Phillips all came over for pizza pie along with the Browns from Ibadan. Afterward we had homemade churned ice cream. All the adults ate here in the living room while the children ate in Benjy's school room.

Benjy's school room is the second class-room in the language school building. We only use one room for our classes: really all we need with only four of us in the class.

The rains have begun and the weather has been unseasonably cool. We have needed a blanket and a spread at night. The inclement weather has kept the children inside underfoot and has made us all short tempered with them.

Today we went to church at Emanuel Baptist Church on the same

road that runs in front of the mission compound but a mile or so away. Pastor Babalola, who is also a student at B.B.H.S., preached a good sermon on Christian temptation. I was thrilled to be able to understand most of it. Pastor Babalola is married and lost two children in Ogbomosho last year to a post-measles pneumonia.

October 7, 1961

Saturday

Oyo

We have completed our fourth week of language study. Most of us alternate between dissatisfaction and despondency. Our inbred use of tone and inflection to express emotion, interrogation, and so forth militates against us as we try to use tone to express word meaning. It is especially hard to ask if we are pronouncing a word right if that word ends in a low tone. Our impulse is to end on a high tone meaning: "Are we saying it right?"

Ina Frazier and all the little Fraziers have been on the compound this week. Don has gone to Owerri to conduct a revival. Unfortunately little Scott (the youngest Frazier) has been sick all week. He has been sick for three weeks or more with diarrhea and occasional bouts of vomiting. In between time though he looks perky and good. However this morning he has been vomiting again so Ina is moving all of the children and herself on to the rest house in Ogbomosho to be near the hospital and doctors there.

Alice is washing clothes this morning: this being Saturday. Most Saturdays we get up with the turning on of the light plant at 6:30 a.m., hurriedly dress and go out back to coax the dew-wet

wood into a blaze under the black iron wash pot.

Breakfast is eaten on the run while we try to go out often and fan the flagging fire. By eight or shortly thereafter we have the first run of clothes in the washing machine. The light plant is left on until we finish the wash, which is usually lunch time or after.

This being the end of the rainy season we have had stormy weather nearly every Saturday. On one Saturday we had a torrential rain which beat some of the clothes off of the line and into the muddy grass beneath. However today promises better!

We went to Ogbomosho on Wednesday evening to see Connell Smith and Bill Gaventa on some medical committee matters. The city electricity is being hooked into the compound there, and their own light plant is cut off. So for two weeks now they have had no lights at all. It is amazing how depressing and dreary evenings can be without lights.

I think it must not have seemed so to "the old-timers" though. I remember as a child seeing my father and his mother and others sit on our screened-in front porch with the lights turned off by choice. I can remember asking them repeatedly why they did not want any lights for I could not understand it.

Benjy is doing very well in his school. We begin by ten o'clock after all of us have a coffee break. Alice, Marion, and Rev. Fowler¹⁸ go back to Yoruba School, and Benjy and I go into

¹⁸Rev. Fowler was an Anglican Missionary who taught at St. Andrew's School in Oyo. He studied Yoruba at our language school.

the adjoining room for the first grade.

We usually start the day with a prayer. Then we follow closely the prepared outline in Calvert System: a five minute warm-up period, twenty minutes on numbers, twenty minutes on reading, a short break, twenty minutes on science, twenty minutes on Phonics. Then Alisa and Harriet join us for story and activity time. Of course we do not adhere to the schedule exactly, and I frequently have to add material to that suggested by the course books.

October 11, 1961

Wednesday

Oyo

As I was tucking Benjy in bed tonight, Alice and I were talking about Pastor Babalola's loosing another one of his children. Four of his children have died in the last three years.

Benjy asked what it felt like to be dead. I tried to explain our concept of heaven and hell as clearly as I could to the seven year old boy. I explained how we believed that Jesus has made a way for us to come to heaven when we die and be with Him. He seems to understand very well for a little boy and took in what I said about our not being good enough by ourselves to live with a perfect God and that Jesus came to help us. When I asked him if he would like to be a Christian he eagerly said yes. He prayed, with my help, "God, I am a bad boy. Sometimes I do things I know are wrong... like when I hit the baby the other day. But, God, I want to trust Jesus as my Savior to take me to heaven when I die."

When he finished I saw that his eyes had the added sparkle

that cores with unleashed tears.

Before I left him then I told him the story of Peter's swimming to the beach to meet Jesus and how Jesus had urged him to feed His sheep.

We ended on the note that faith in Jesus means we will try to serve Him too.

We attended the naming ceremony for Rev. Taiwo's grandson today. About twelve of us were present in Rev. Taiwo's small living room. The walls are mud with a cement plaster painted blue. Two old action group almanacs hung on one wall, and a new 1961 calendar printed by a nearby town in honor of its notable citizens was on another.

Rev. Taiwo was beaming as he gave out numerous kola nuts. His daughter, the child's mother, was quite neatly dressed in native attire.

We sang a hymn, had a word of prayer and read from several scripture passages including the Christmas story. Then we all stood as Reverend Taiwo solemnly took the child in his arms and officiously named him all six of his names. The child will bear any of these six names and perhaps some more in addition if circumstances dictate new appellations.

October 16, 1961

Monday

Oyo

Pastor Babalola holds a certificate from the Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, but he wants to someday get his degree. So he has gone back to high school here in Oyo. He also is the pastor of Emanuel Baptist Mission Church at Owode section of Oyo

where we go.

Last year I was in Ogbomosho when he lost his, young, twin children. He lost another child before that too. So last Sunday we were quite distressed to find him absent from church and learn that he had gone to Ogbomosho suddenly because of the illness of his new four month old baby. This week the baby died.

Yesterday he came to church gaunt and haggard, but he preached on the first chapter of Ruth. After telling of Naomi's loosing her husband and Ruth and Orpha loosing theirs, he read how Naomi called herself bitter. But he affirmed that even though we sometimes do not know why God does certain things that we must trust Him. Even though we have pain and death we must have faith and trust.

November 6, 1961

Monday

Oyo

Last Sunday I preached my first sermon in Yoruba. I wrote it out in English first. Then laboriously translated it into Yoruba. Then Mr. Ajayi, my consultant, read it to the tape recorder. For many nights I sat by the hour listening to that recorded sermon and saying it over and over again after the recording. Sunday I read it at Emanuel Baptist Church: a very small church where we have moved our membership. Wednesday Alice told the parable of the sower at the leprosy service.

Both of us are thrilled over these attempts, and also thrilled over being able to hear more and more of the sermons by others.



Benjy, Harriet and Alisa ready for church

Halloween night all of our children went over to the Fines for trick or treat. After that the Fines, the Fraziers, (who were passing through) and the kids from here all came back here for ghost tales and candy. What a motley crew it was - some with black Mother Hubbard cloaks with orange appliqués, one with Indian feathers, some in make shift costumes from oversized adult clothes. We enjoyed the candy-bats, candy-witches, and so forth which we had bought a year ago and had put up in jars -- even if the heart of the witches had turned to sugar.

We used an "elegede" (a kind of pumpkin) to make a Jack-o-lantern. They are narrower than pumpkins, and green instead of orange like their American counterparts. But the candle inside burned just as brightly with an orange hue. I could not help thinking what use a moralist would make of the relative importance of the flaming heart and skin coloration of Jack-o-lanterns.

November 8, 1961

Wednesday

Oyo

I went to the Leprosy Service alone today to conduct prayer meeting. I gave a flannel graft on Daniel and ended with an application to Jesus in the New Testament. However there was not any satisfaction and thrill today of trying to preach in this new and difficult language. Perhaps I am just tired -- perhaps the "new" has worn off for both me and the leprosy patients. Or perhaps it is a renewed realization of how poorly I am able to use this language after all my effort last tour and this.

While ringing the heavy old cast iron bell in front of the little cement block chapel today, it fell off of its hinges. Several of the lepers and I tried to lift the heavy cumbersome thing back up on the little cement block tower. I do not think the sight of white and black hands working together struck me as forcefully as did the fact that some of the hands that were laboring had no fingers left on them.

A Dr. Lamp, who is a board internist at the Seventh Day

Adventist Hospital in Ile-Ife, is temporarily living on the compound and coming to class with us. He has a letter into our E.C. requesting permission to join our class. Apparently our language school here is as good as can be found in Yoruba anywhere.

Dr. Gorner passed through today on his way to Okuta. Alice and the women have gotten together tonight to plan for tomorrow night. For when he and Mrs. Gorner return tomorrow they will stop here in Oyo with the Martins overnight.

Harriet and John Martin have formed a very close friendship. Some days they "cook" together, some days they "wash cloths" together, and some days they have church together. This last is right striking: they stand side by side with "hymn books" open and sing "'Onion' Christian Soldiers."

Alisa and Benjy are both thrilled over their new bicycles and have both learned to ride well.

November 17, 1961

Friday

Oyo

This past weekend I went to Shaki to take night call at the hospital there because Bud Doshier is in Ibadan with his wife who is going to have a baby.

Margaret Richardson looked somewhat tired just after my arrival there -- she had just finished the Friday clinic -- but by Saturday she seemed refreshed.

Saturday evening we went over to the old mission compound. And with Peggy Marchman, Sara Lou Henley and the Richardsons I

climbed to the top of the high rock tor to have a picnic supper. The top of the rock is flat and so pleasant as the warm wind sweeps over it. This wind also keeps the insects away and one can watch the stars peep out one by one without slapping and jumping.

As the twilight gloom deepens it becomes quite a contest with the young people to see which one can spot the most fires burning in the fields. By counting every faint hazy brightness on the horizon as well as the close fires we made up a total of twelve fires. Meanwhile the hamburgers which were rolled up in aluminum foil between two slices of potato cooked to a "T", and were enjoyed by all.

Saturday night I was up off and on from 12:00 midnight to 5:00 a.m. with a Cesarean Section. I was glad to be able to give Margaret that rest though and truly after working with the language for these three months I was glad to get in a little bit of medicine.

I have been "down in the dumps" the last few days about my slow progress in the language. After break time today, Mr. Awujoola called me aside to talk to me about my devotional this morning. In typical Yoruba style he stayed four feet away from me and would not look me in the eye. I felt sure that some dire criticism was coming. He began to talk about how when he listened to our devotionals he tried to pretend that he was an illiterate and listen to them with a critical ear. He elaborated on this theme for a few minutes, and then said that many of my sentences were just exactly like a Yoruba man would have said them. I

realized then that he was complimenting me, and I hardly knew what to say because I was expecting criticism.

At the leprosy settlement this past week, Alice talked about feeding the five thousand. She has done wonderfully well in Yoruba and seems to be enjoying her school days.

November 19, 1961

Sunday

Shaki

I am tired! It feels good to lie down and it is a great temptation not to write tonight.

Friday night Bud Doshier passed through Oyo and picked up Jud who had spent the week with Benjy. However Bud's plan of picking up Mayrene in Ibadan and returning to Shaki on Saturday did not work out. Mayrene is still having some post-partum pain and is very blue and depressed. So Bud is staying with her in Ibadan at the rest house to let her recuperate some. He asked me if I would come here to Shaki and help out until he could return. Knowing how strongly Bud feels about language study, I knew he would not have asked me to come if it was not imperative.

This morning I fulfilled an engagement at Christ Church, Ave, where I preached in Yoruba on sacrifices from Hebrews 10:11-14. I was disappointed in the response of the congregation and therefore disappointed in myself as a preacher. This afternoon at 3:30 p.m. I came on to Shaki. Sara Lou Henley came with me. On the way we saw a wrecked Chevrolet, and sure enough Margaret had seven wreck victims up here to take care of today. Just four miles outside of Shaki Sara Lou and I had wheel trouble. The lugs were loose on

the left rear wheel: I do not know why. The lug-holes in the wheel are nearly ruined.

Just after arriving in Shaki, a strangulated hernia came into the hospital. He had to have two inches of bowel resected. He seems to be doing O.K. now, but we must pray for him.

November 20, 1961

Monday

Shaki

Our clinic today was fairly large and one strangulated hernia had to be repaired just before lunch.

The hospital revival service is this week. Rev. Agboola from Abeokuta s the visiting evangelist. I have heard a lot of wonderful things about him. Some say he is the Billy Graham of Nigeria. I was most impressed with the man in person! He preached a forceful fine sermon in the Outpatient Department this morning. He is slim and his smooth, unwrinkled, boyish face belies his maturity. He has close cropped white hair and is every bit the image of the better parts of the old time American Negro preacher.

Tonight at 8:30, I was called to see a man with a strangulated hernia. He was lying supine on a pew in the O.P.D. and appeared groggy. I thought at first that he might be faking it just to get his hernia done early. The hernia itself was soft with no sign of strangulation, but he was distended. I asked them to move him to the examining table and half way there he collapsed. When we got him on the table he began to vomit copious amounts of native medicine. In spite of our turning his head and

trying to prevent it, he aspirated some of the vomitus. His respirations continued jerkily but his heart stopped. When I put the stethoscope over the precordium there was a fluttering sound of fibrillation. Closed chest cardiac massage was to no avail, and the patient died immediately. As I was leaving to come home, down cast, one of the ward aids came up and said: "Please, doctor, is there any charge for him?"

November 21, 1961

Tuesday

Shaki

No news from Bud and Mayrene yet. I surely pray that she has not had a severe post-partum depression. Perhaps they will come tomorrow or at least we will hear from them in the mail anyway.

One of the hernias I did this morning was as bad and as hard as any I have ever seen. It was a hernia hydrocele combined and had hemorrhage and inflammation in it. Small bowel was adherent to the bottom of the sac which was in turn adherent to the top of the hydrocele.

This afternoon was quiet. I spent much of the time reading J.N. Hunt's book "From Plow Handles to the Pulpit", and I felt very refreshed by it.

November 23, 1961

Thursday

Shaki

We had hoped to hear from the Doshers yesterday. We kept glancing up the road every little while in hopes of seeing the little Peugeot coming up -- all to no avail. To make our anxiety worse Margaret Richardson was unable to find her post office box

key so we were unable to get the mail last night.

This morning I got a letter from Alice written on Tuesday night saying that she had called Ibadan and it was hoped that the Doshers would come to Shaki today.

Alice also said that she and the others in Oyo had talked about it and decided to postpone Thanksgiving dinner until tomorrow night. I read the letter in between surgical cases and had a warm happy feeling to realize that I would be back with my family tomorrow evening.

November 26, 1961

Sunday

Oyo

Friday night Thanksgiving supper was delicious if we did have two baked hens instead of a turkey.

We all ate in Margaret and Henry's large dining room. And somehow all the station being together -- The Fines, the Martins, the Edwards, and Mary Frank Kirkpatrick from Ibadan -- seemed extra warm and good this time. Perhaps it was the effect of my recent fairly lonely stay in Shaki since much of my free time was spent alone in the Doshers' empty house, but whatever it was as I drew my chair up to the table the atmosphere seemed extra cozy, extra warm and extra "American Thanksgiving".

Yesterday we began having visitors at breakfast time and it continued all day. Rev. Shobowole came just as we were eating breakfast. The Doshers came for lunch. Benjy's birthday party in the afternoon drew about twenty four guests. The Fraziers came for supper. This morning when Harriet woke up she said: "Mommy,

who's eating with us today?"

Benjy's birthday party was a mixture of missionary kids and Nigerians about half and half. We had a rather hectic time trying to explain how to play games in English and Yoruba. We served ground nuts, cake, and candy and gave each child a little toy car as a souvenir.

This morning I preached in Yoruba at Ishokun Baptist Church, I felt much better satisfied with the service this time than I did last Sunday although the sermon was still a little disjointed in places.

December 17, 1961

Sunday

OYo

Tomorrow I will be thirty-three. The Lord had completed His work at that age. I hope my own work is just beginning. Today I enjoyed the first fruits of my work. That is to say that the Lord blessed our service today with four conversions.

I preached at Okeho first Church in Yoruba, and when the invitation was given four adult women came forward saying that they wanted to believe in Jesus for the first time. I am sure that it is the work of the Holy Spirit of God that can reach even through our poor attempts in a foreign language. How very dependent on the Lord I felt this morning before the service began. Fear gave me a tingling sensation in my chest, and I prayed more times than usual for God's help. How thrilling it was to see those four ladies come forward during the invitation.

I had the privilege of going visiting with Don Frazier of

Okeho, and Reverend Aiki of Ilero on Saturday. Rev. Aiki is a wonderful pastor, they say, who visits his people daily. Don was invited to preach the revival there this week, and he did it all in Yoruba. There were 114 conversions during the week. It is doubly thrilling to know that Rev. Aiki will be back visiting those people, encouraging them, and teaching them.

Alice and I put on the Smithfield Ham tonight to boil. We will set the clock for 2:00 a.m. to get it off the stove.

January 1, 1962

Monday

OYo

We had planned to go to Igedi on Thursday the 20th. We finished school for the holidays on the 19th, and had a Christmas party at the Fine's. However our car started sounding terrible on the 19th. By evening I had found that a bearing was burned out in the left front wheel. I sent the carpenter, here, to Ibadan early on the morning of the 20th to buy bearings. By 9:00 a.m. I had done all that could be done until the bearings came, therefore I started tampering with other parts of the car. There were some bad bushings in the tie-rod steering system, and I had replacements for them on hand so I started into that. I thought that if it proved hard to get the old bushings out that I could stop before any damage was done, but the very first thing one of them tore up. Then the job had to be completed. I worked for six hours trying to get the metal sleeves on the bushings out but could not do so.

Benjy kept moping around saying: "We could be there now if